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IN THE CLAIMS:

The status and content of each claim follows.

1-69. (Cancelled)

70. (new) A method of selling items over a computer network, said method comprising:

during a preliminary bidding that does not result in sale of an item, providing information about a plurality of items over said computer network and accepting a plurality of increasing preliminary bids for each of said plurality of items, wherein said preliminary bidding for each item continues for a specific set period of time that is included in said information;

closing the preliminary bidding for each of said items upon expiration of said period of time corresponding to that item;

providing results of said preliminary bidding over said computer network such that bidders can select items from among said plurality of items to bid on during a subsequent sale of said plurality of items;

offering each of said items for sale over said computer network, wherein a starting bid for each said item is determined by a highest bid received on that item during said preliminary bidding;

receiving increasing bids for each item until a high bid is determined, wherein that item is sold to a bidder providing said high bid.

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71. (new) The method of claim 70, further comprising:  
receiving a proxy bid during said preliminary bidding on a said item;  
automatically entering a new preliminary bid based on said proxy bid that betters any preliminary bid received on that item that is lower than said proxy bid; and  
if said specific period of time expires before a current preliminary bid on said item reaches said proxy bid, entering a new bid during said sale of said item that betters any bid received on that item that is lower than said proxy bid.

72. (new) The method of claim 70, displaying for each bidder a countdown timer that times a countdown during the sale of a said item, the countdown timer informing each bidder of a time remaining until a current bid for that item is determined to be the high bid for that item.

73. (new) The method of claim 72, further comprising displaying for each bidder the words "going, going, gone," in that sequence, as said countdown elapses.

74. (new) The method of claim 72, wherein said countdown timer resets in response to receipt of a new bid prior to said countdown elapsing.

75. (new) The method of claim 74, wherein said countdown is shortened each time said countdown timer is reset.

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76. (new) The method of claim 70, further comprising displaying a current bid for an item being sold during said receiving increasing bids, and displaying with said current bid a geographic location of a bidder who has entered that current bid.

77. (new) The method of claim 70, wherein said specific period of time comprises a number of days.

78. (new) The method of claim 70, further comprising providing a second specific period of time between said closing said preliminary bidding and said offering each of said items for sale such that bidders can review results of said preliminary bidding during said second specific period of time.

79. (new) The method of claim 78, wherein said second specific period of time is determined by a vendor conducting said sale.

80. (new) The method of claim 70, wherein said providing information about said plurality of items is performed such that information about each of said plurality of items is available simultaneously.

81. (new) The method of claim 70, wherein offering each of said items for sale is performed one item at a time.

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82. (new) The method of claim 81, further comprising issuing an alert to specific bidders just prior to sale of a specific item from said plurality of items.

83. (new) The method of claim 82, wherein issuing said alert includes generating a communication external to said computer network.

84. (new) The method of claim 70, further comprising displaying a matrix of bid amounts from which a preliminary bidder or a bidder during said sale can select an amount to enter as a preliminary bid during said preliminary bidding or a bid during said sale.